

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CUBAN LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY [LIBERTAD] ACT OF 1995

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENTS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a cloture vote occur tonight at 8:30 p.m. and that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the second cloture vote, if necessary, occur on Tuesday, October 17, 1995, at a time to be determined by the two leaders, and that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ASHCROFT. Reserving the right to object, and I will not object. I would just like to say I had hoped to get a vote on my amendment, which is the pending business on the Cuba resolution, and I will do whatever I can, wherever I can, to get that amendment an opportunity for a vote, but I do not want to stand in the way of this important resolution. So I will not object at this time to this unanimous-consent request, but will be seeking to get a vote on it in the event that the cloture vote fails, or, in the event that the cloture vote succeeds, I will amend the next business or near next business of the Senate in order to get that vote. I do not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any other objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have listened to some of the debate on the Cuba resolution and, in a way, I almost think I am watching the U.S. Senate scripted by Monty Python. You would think that we have these two huge megacountries at war with each other, trying to see which one can get some kind of an advantage over the other. But the situation as it is involves the most powerful nation in history and an impoverished little island. I do not hold any brief for Mr. Castro and his brand of communism, nor do I hold any brief for the mistakes he has made in

his country that have caused suffering among his own people.

But when you hear in this debate suggestions that somehow United States security is at risk if we do not continue to punish Mr. Castro and the people of Cuba, that is ridiculous, Mr. President. It is a bit like the argument we heard about a decade ago that if the Soviet Union were able to have their supporters in Nicaragua, the next thing you know, they would be marching on Galveston, TX. It ignores the reality of the situation and ignores the fact that if they were foolish enough to do that, they would not get very far. The Texas National Guard is stronger than any Central American military force.

Here we have a situation where some are saying we should not even give Fidel Castro a visa to go to the United Nations, as if the United States would turn its back on its own treaty and legal obligations in that regard. Maybe at some point we should acknowledge the reality. The reality is that you have an aging Communist leader, whom time and history and economic realities have left behind, who must realize that himself, and who will not live forever—as none of us do—but a man who poses no threat to the United States ideologically, militarily, economically, or in any other way. But you have an awful lot of people on that little island who do not have medical needs met, nutritional needs met, and so many of their economic needs certainly are not met.

We have the rest of the world looking at the United States and saying, “What are they afraid of?” Our neighbor to the north, Canada, a country with whom we share the longest unguarded frontier in the world, has regular relations with Cuba. I can drive an hour from my home in Vermont to the airport in Montreal and get on a plane to Cuba. They are not threatened by it. But here, in the most powerful nation on Earth, I cannot do that. I would have to have all kinds of special exemptions made and State Department authorization, and on and on and on. You know, at some point, somebody is going to say that we are afraid of our own shadow. I do not think we are. We are too good and too powerful a nation for that.

Let us pay attention to the real foreign policy concerns of our country. Let us ask ourselves, should we not be spending far more time in reasserting the leadership we have not given NATO over the past 3, 4, or 5 years? Let us ask whether we should be doing more to support the emerging democracies of the world. Let us ask what we are doing to expand our markets abroad like the Japanese, Europeans, and others do, at a time when we have huge balance-of-payment deficits, which started about 8 years ago. Let us not continue this absurd obsession with the aging leader of a tiny little island that poses no threat to the United States.

It demeans what we stand for, and it impedes the development of closer rela-

tions between our two countries. It is by strengthening those ties, by enabling Americans to travel freely to Cuba and Cubans to come here, that we will eventually see democracy in Cuba, not by continuing to isolate Cuba as if the Cold War had never ended and the Soviet Union were still trying to put its missiles there. The times have changed, and it is time we changed with the times.

BIPARTISAN BUDGET SUMMIT NEEDED NOW

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this morning's headline reports that budget negotiations between the President and the Republican congressional leaders have broken down. Instead of working together, the leaders are slinging partisan arrows of blame at each other in today's papers. I think, because of that, it is all the more reason to have a bipartisan summit on the budget.

In fact, this is the third time in the last 2 months and the fourth time this year that I have called for a summit meeting between congressional leaders and the President to resolve their budget differences.

In my earlier speeches, my main concern has been to avoid the costly and unnecessary Government shutdown that some have predicted in the beginning of the fiscal year last week. Fortunately, the President and the Congress have avoided this disaster. We agreed to a continuing resolution that funds the Government for the next 6 weeks. I applaud the bipartisan cooperation displayed to reach this continuing resolution.

But I fear that the President and the Republican congressional leadership are now playing a more serious game of chicken—a high-stakes game over raising the debt limit.

The Government is fast approaching the \$4.9 trillion ceiling of Federal borrowing imposed by Congress in 1993. For the Government to keep paying its bills, Congress has to increase the debt limit. I think the deadline is about a month away on November 15, when the Government needs to borrow to meet \$25 billion in interest payments, payments due thousands of individuals, businesses, financial institutions, and pension funds that own Treasury securities.

The Republican leaders are now threatening to use the debt limit as a club to beat the President into submission over the budget. Already, 165 Republican Members of the House of Representatives have pledged to refuse to vote for raising the debt limit, unless the President agrees to what they say should be the budget. In 21 years here, I have not seen an action so irresponsible by either Democrats or Republicans. The Speaker of the House, NEWT GINGRICH, is not helping by going along with the ultimatum and saying, “I am with them. I do not intend to schedule the debt limit if they are not met.” It sounds almost like a child in a sandbox